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TAGS: [OTRA](#) [AMGT](#) [ASEC](#) [APER](#) [SL](#)

SUBJECT: FREETOWN GRANTS COUNTRY CLEARANCE REQUEST FOR  
S/WCI SPECIAL ADVISOR MARK STAMILIO

REF: SECSTATE 15588

¶1. Post welcomes the visit of Mark Stamilio, U.S. Department of State, Special Advisor to the Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes Issues. Mr. Stamilio will travel to Freetown to represent the USG during a UN Management Committee visit to the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) February 18-22. A contract expediter will meet Mr. Stamilio. Visitors are urged to read the contents of this telegram, as it provides useful information intended to ensure the success of your visit to Freetown.

¶2. Control officer for the visit: Martin Dale,  
Political/Economic Officer  
Contact numbers: 232-22-515-120.  
CELL PHONE: 232-76-616-609.  
E-Mail: DaleMA@state.gov  
Embassy Freetown Switchboard: 232-22-515-000 or  
232-76-515-000 X 5120.

¶3. All visiting USG personnel are required to receive a security briefing from the Regional Security Officer (RSO) upon arrival. (See Paragraph 10.)

¶4. Visitors should consult the State Department Intranet (Opennet: [HTTP://Freetown.State.Gov/](http://Freetown.State.Gov/)) or Internet ([HTTP://Freetown.Usembassy.Gov/](http://Freetown.Usembassy.Gov/)) sites for further information on the post and country.

¶5. Accommodations: SCSL Registry Liaison reserved at Bintumani Hotel at approx \$125/per night. Credit cards are generally not accepted. Please bring cash, travelers' checks, or travel orders with valid fiscal data.

¶6. Visa Information: A visa is required for entry and visitors should obtain a visa in advance. Airport visas may be obtained only in extreme circumstances, as they are very difficult to arrange and are not encouraged.

¶7. Health/Medical: Medical facilities in Sierra Leone fall critically short of U.S. standards. Presently, the only reliable medical facility is located 45 minutes outside of Freetown. Official visitors who do not possess a Class I medical clearance or have serious health concerns, e.g., diabetes, heart disease, asthma, or who are on blood thinners (with the exception of aspirin) are discouraged from traveling to Sierra Leone. The Embassy Health Unit stocks only limited medical supplies and is not equipped to handle serious illnesses. All visitors and permanently assigned employees traveling to Sierra Leone must have their vaccinations current to include, but not limited to, tetanus, yellow fever, polio, meningitis, and rabies (for those staying longer than 30 days). The cholera vaccine is not required. Visitors should begin taking malaria prophylaxis two weeks prior to arrival. It is mandatory that visitors bring their own supply of medications, as local pharmacies in Freetown are usually unable to fill prescriptions. The International Certificate of Vaccinations yellow card should

be hand carried as proof of current yellow fever inoculation. Avoid eating uncooked vegetables and salads at restaurants and hotels.

¶18. Medical Insurance: Non-Department of State personnel or contractors are required to have medical evacuation insurance prior to traveling to Sierra Leone.

¶19. Travel to/from Freetown: Regional air service into Freetown is sporadic, thus be prepared to handle alternate ticketing and/or increased food and lodging expenses.

SCSL Registry Liaison is arranging transportation between Lungi Airport and Freetown via UN helicopter. If travelers need to spend the night in Lungi, arrangements can be made. Travelers are advised to carry sufficient cash to pay for the cost of accommodations in Lungi, which is approximately Le 187500 or USD 75.00/night, since credit cards are not accepted.

Passengers departing Freetown with certain airlines must pay an Airport Tax of USD 40.00 (payable in U.S. Dollars) at the airport.

¶10. Threat Assessment - Security Advice: All visiting USG personnel will be required to receive a security briefing from the Regional Security Officer (RSO) upon arrival. Sierra Leone is rated high for crime. Visitors will be provided a two-way radio and instructions on how to summon assistance in the event of an emergency. All travel outside of Freetown must have the approval of the Control Officer and the RSO. The following guidance is provided to ensure your visit to Sierra Leone is safe and uneventful:

- Do not use credit cards and personal checks in the local economy;

- Do not carry or wear any items that may attract attention by thieves. Carry needed items deep in your pockets;

- Do not walk around the city alone, especially at night;

- Do not use taxis or public transportation;

- Do not accept the assistance of strangers;

- Do not take photographs of people without first asking as they can easily become offended. Do not photograph government or military facilities, including the airport;

- If confronted by criminals, do not make threatening movements, comments, or gestures. Immediately give the criminals what they want.

¶11. Computer Systems Access: If you are a Department of State employee and would like to access OpenNet during your visit (without taking the 30-60 minute systems security briefing), please bring confirmation that you have attended, within the last year, the "Security Awareness Briefing on OpenNet Plus". This must be a copy of the certificate you received when you completed the briefing. Ask your systems administrator if you need help locating the DS Security Awareness Briefing Certificate.

¶12. Post Policy on Laptops and Thumb Drives: The RSO must approve the use of any laptop computer in the Embassy. Thumb drives are not authorized for use on Embassy computers unless officially issued with a Dept. of State classification label on it or approved by the IMO. Thumb drives are absolutely not/allowed on the CLASSNET. Thumb Drives brought into the Embassy must be cleared by the RSO Office.

¶13. General Information: Travelers with TDY orders and fiscal data may cash checks at the Embassy cashier. The exchange rate is approximately 3000 Leones to one USD.

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